

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

23 September 2009

(week 39)

(Confirmed)

Present:

Said Irandoust

Nitin Afzulpurkar

Amrit Bart

Izel Ann Dante

Peter Haddawy

Weerakorn Ongsakul

Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai

Sudip Rakshit

Jayant Routray

Vilas M Salokhe

Shankar Tagad

Secretariat:

Karma Rana

Namita Sravat

Apologies:

Jonathan Shaw

Ram M Shrestha

Barbara Igel

Invitee:

Ms. Ann Lopez

PAC 09.09.04 Welcome and Apologies

The President welcomed all present to the PAC meeting, especially, Prof. Vilas M Salokhe who was attending his first PAC meeting as Academic Senate Chair (to be installed formally during AS meeting that afternoon). He also noted that the Directors of the AIT Satellite Centers are members of the PAC. The apologies were noted.

PAC 09.09.05 Approval and Review of the Minutes of the PAC meetings - 26 August and 9 September 2009

The minutes of the PAC meeting held on 26 August and 9 September 2009 (with minor editorial corrections) were **approved**.

Follow-up Issues: The President informed that the follow-up issues from the PAC minutes will be taken care of by the Head-Administration, Ms. Izel. Regarding the new guidelines on supplementary allowances for academic administrative positions, the President clarified that the coordination work for academic programs in Fund 30 cannot be considered as an additional academic administrative position if carried out by School Deans. Also, the reduced teaching load during one's term of office as School Dean refer to are on the regular academic programs, i.e. extra teaching load should be avoided on weekdays.

PAC 09.09.06 Matters Arising from the Minutes

1] Finalization of P&P on Financial Model for Academic Programs in Fund 30

It was informed that when the finalized version of this P&P (as per the comments made during the PAC meeting on 24 August 2009) was circulated for any further comments, clarification regarding the clause II.E that read "*For professional programs under the Fund 30 financial structure, the sum of the following components shall not be less than 35% of the projected gross revenues: degree surcharge, payroll recovery, and surplus. For other academic programs under the Fund 30 financial structure, the sum shall not be less than 20% of the projected gross revenues.*" was sought regarding the components mentioned to be the degree surcharge, payroll recovery and surplus, or degree surcharge, payroll recovery and overhead, that is currently being practiced by SET; and in case overhead is not included then should the percentage be 24% instead of 35%. The President stated that the components will be fixed assets, degree surcharge, payroll recovery and surplus, and the percentage will be 30% instead of 35%. The PAC **endorsed** that the clause II.E would now read as "*For professional programs under the Fund 30 financial structure, the sum of the following components, which are contributions to Fund 10, shall not be less than 30% of the projected gross revenues: fixed assets, degree surcharge, payroll recovery, and surplus. For other academic programs under the Fund 30 financial structure, the sum shall not be less than 20% of the projected gross revenues.*"

With the distinction on application of principles on professional programs and other academic programs, it was deemed necessary to also clearly define these programs in II.B.

It was also **agreed** that discounts on tuition and registration fees be limited to 25%.

The PAC **agreed to endorse** the P&P on Financial Model for Academic Programs in Fund 30 with above mentioned corrections.

PAC 09.09.07 Issues from the President

The President briefed the members on following:

- **New Charter of AIT** - Waiting for information from Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the date of adoption for the New Charter of AIT. With the visits to Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos the promotional trips will end by end of October 2009.
- **MoA with Amata Corporation Public Company Limited** - The President mentioned that he has signed an MoA aimed at furthering cooperation between AIT and Amata, which will entail the conducting of a feasibility study for the setting up of an international educational hub for undergraduate and /or postgraduate programs in Amata Nakorn including related activities and services as may be mutually agreed upon by both parties. He has formed a task force to work with Amata that will be led by VP-RD, Prof. Worsak.
- **Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model for AIT** - The President stated that he is looking forward to a discussion on PPP during the Academic Senate meeting that afternoon. He has formed an administrative PPP team aimed at facilitating the exploration of a PPP concept for AIT and preparing the position paper for AIT. The PPP team will be chaired by the President and comprises of Dr. Roland Amoussou-Guenou, Ms. Izel Ann Dante, Mr. Noppadon Rittipongshusit, Ms. Kulvimol Wasuntiwongse, Mr. Jean-Philippe Thouard, Mr. Olivier Dréan, Ms. Namita Sravat, and Mr. Karma Rana. The former AIT Vice President Prof. Ricardo Pama has kindly agreed to serve as an external resource person in an advisory capacity. Also, with the help of the Executive Committee, there will be two more external resource persons with expertise on legal and business aspects of such undertaking. The special webpage on PPP has been created to share the information collected and relevant documents with the AIT Community members.
- **An internal mailing list for the Management Team** has been created, and members were requested to treat the information as confidential, and not to copy it to other members. To avoid confusion, an administrator when giving his/her opinion should specifically note it in the email. It was suggested that a web forum could also be created for discussion amongst the administrators.
- **Hot Seat** - The Media and Communications Unit has launched the 'Hot Seat' as part of a new initiative which will feature an important functionary of the Institute, a visiting dignitary (alumnus or a partner), or a prominent personality associated with AIT. The President had been interviewed as the first guest.
- **New Initiatives** - The President stated that he is thinking of integrating Professional Programs and the Academic Quality Assurance and Accreditation into the Center for Learning Innovations and Quality (CLIQ). Also with the launching of Undergraduate Program by October 2009, there is no more need for the position of the Director of UG. For the Director of Unified Programs he still needs to discuss it with the Director concerned and will decide later on this position.
- **Student Union and Administration Meeting** - The President stated that he had a very fruitful meeting with the Student Union office bearers and follow-up actions on various issues brought forward will be taken up accordingly.
- **AIT City Campus** - The President informed that Sathorn Tower (has BTS station at walking distance) has been identified as the location for the AIT City Campus location but the contract has not been signed yet. It can accommodate 4 classrooms, 1 seminar room, 3-4 offices, and a small pantry.
- **Guidelines on Inventory Lists** - The President informed that new guidelines with respect to Inventory Lists of fixed assets will be ready which will need to be strictly implemented. A member suggested that RFID tag technology integrated with ERP database could be used in future to track the inventories. A member also suggested that AIT should have a central store where the furniture and other fixed assets not in use could be stored and made available for reuse to the AIT community members interested in it.
- The "Follow-up Issues from the Executive Committee" meeting were circulated to the PAC members to address the issues concerning them accordingly; specifically formatting concerning reports

according to the Executive Committee request, with KPIs on the performance for the Institute as a whole and Schools. The Head-Administration, Ms. Izel was requested to follow-up on the Retirement Age proposal; the VP-AA, Prof. Haddawy to coordinate with the VP-R, Prof. Rakshit to work on the Quality Assurance Related Issues, and Dr. Naveed Anwar on revised proposal on AIT Consulting. A suggestion to invite ABET accreditations was well taken by the VP-AA.

PAC 09.09.08 Report of the Academic Senate

The President informed that he has now approved all the recommendations made by the Academic Senate based on the confirmed minutes of its meetings held on 25 March, 29 April, 9 July and 29 July 2009.

PAC 09.09.09 Discount to Children of AIT Alumni to study at AIT and AIT Community School

It was **clarified** that the discount to children of AIT Alumni is only applicable for candidates applying to the post graduate studies at AIT. The effective date for this policy implementation is August 2009 (thus, for new student intake from August 2009 onwards). AIT guarantees at least 25% discount for the eligible candidates. The fellowship cost has to be borne by the concerned FoS. A suggestion to have space in the application form to provide information whether the applicant is a child of an AIT Alumni was accepted and the Head-Students will be **requested** to *revise the application form accordingly and present to the PAC.*

It was also **clarified** that there is no discount for children of AIT alumni studying at the AIT Community School.

PAC 09.09.10 Academic Facilities for the HEC supported Visiting Research Scholars

There was a concern raised regarding the academic facilities and equipments to be provided to the HEC-supported visiting research scholars who pay for it, but that the FoS does not receive the fees. The Head-Administration clarified that the Finance Office has confirmed that it is under tuition fess of fund 10 for the FoS receiving the fellows. A member noted that in this case it cannot be used by the FoS/School in that particular year (as they are not budgeted in advance). The President stated that the fellow fees can be credited to the School PDF for ease in use. The laptop and other fixed assets if bought becomes AIT property which can be passed on to future fellows.

PAC 09.09.11 Sodexo Services

There were some concerns raised regarding the Gas Service provided by the Sodexo, and it was clarified that initially in the service contract the Gas Service was not originally included which Sodexo has now agreed to include. A member noted that as a tenant they would like to know what change in services is expected, what are their assessments regarding the plans for improvement in the housing units, etc. The President stated that he will form an advisory team to receive the views/feedback of AIT community members and to effectively communicate these to Sodexo to be effectively addressed.

The other concerns raised are given below and the Head-Administration was requested to coordinate with the Sodexo in clarifying these:

- Still confusion on the system for gas delivery, especially on payments (both for employees and students. Also there is confusion on Sodexo contact details. It might be necessary to resend these to the community or include it in their regular updates and communications.
- Problems in communicating through telephone with Sodexo contact persons to report maintenance requests.
- Sodexo responding to maintenance at inappropriate time (particular examples cited were when Sodexo technicians came at 9/10 p.m. to a faculty's accommodation unit, and at 2 a.m. to a student's accommodation unit).

- Very poor response time in attending to maintenance requests, especially for electrical parts (the particular example cited was the non-replacement of a light bulb in one of the toilets of House #15-Prof Routray's since it was reported in July 2009).
- The discontinuation of special cleaning for the Houses, which used to be every three months.
- The discontinuation of air-con cleaning and maintenance in the faculty/staff accommodation units, which used to be every month.
- Non-response/action from Sodexo to address the request for a hand/movable shower and alternative bed raised by a 6-ft high student having difficulties with the fixed shower head and short bed.

In relation to outsourcing of services, a member wanted to know the overall effect with regards to the allocated costs. The President clarified that there are many other reasons for the increase in the allocation costs, like establishment of CLIQ, etc. It was suggested that such investment should be charged from reserves and thus not part of the overhead. Furthermore, the Director's cost should not be part of the President Office. The VP-AA stated that the CLIQ has to be part of investment operations. The President stated that he will discuss the issues raised in the Budget Committee meeting to be held in the afternoon.

PAC 09.09.12 Issues from Student Union

Various issues from the Student Union as follows were discussed:

- **Transparency and selection criteria for student assistantships** - It was noted that for the administrative routine functions, the Student Assistantships should be advertised and recruited as per the P&P which should be strictly implemented. For the project related work, students involved in the research work are usually recruited. However, as suggested by the SU President, in the P&P a clause should be added that if 2 candidates are equally qualified for a Student Assistant position then the preference should be given to self-supported student or those on partial-scholarship over those who receive full scholarship.
- **Fee structure for masters and doctoral program should be based on FoS**, and not on the number of credits which is same across the FoS. During the last PAC meeting this issue was raised and it was agreed that the FoS coordinators would be requested to reflect their operations cost. Accordingly, the differentiated salary system for faculty could then be adopted as per their respective FoS. The President **requested** the VP-AA to form a task force (that includes the School Deans) on possible diversification of differentiated fees structure based on FoS operational costs and come up with the ToR of this task force. The members noted that the TF should also consider various components (bonus system, CoLA etc.) of the salary structure.
- Having in place a **systematic student exchange program for SERD and SET**, similar to what SOM is doing. The Dean/SET, Dr. Afzulpurkar informed that the SET is working on this issue and are aiming at least one comprehensive exchange program with a good university. For SERD, currently it is in the context of the Erasmus Mundus program and it depends on undergoing projects with the partner universities. The VP-AA **requested** the SU Academic Affairs to give some statistics on the universities that the students would be interested in having exchange programs. The President suggested that also the alumni working in Academic Institutes should be contacted with regards to possibility of exchange programs with their universities, and also in relation to the internship programs possibility.

PAC 09.09.13 AIT Academic Calendar 2010

The PAC **endorsed** the draft AIT Academic Calendar for 2010.

PAC 09.09.14 Deferred Items and Next Meeting

Due to time constraints it was **agreed to defer** the discussion on the proposal on Internship Unit and the Finalization of section on Sabbatical Leave to the next PAC meeting in October 2009.